

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 026482

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT VALLETTA 0133 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO USUN
NEW YORK, PRETORIA, CAP TOWN, LUSAKA, DAR ES SALAAM, MAPUTO,
LAGOS, GABORONE, MBABANE 31 JAN 78

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 0133

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TUGS: PDEV,RH, UK

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF AFTERNOON DISCUSSION WITH PF JANUARY 31

SUMMARY: IN A THREE HOUR AFTERNOON MEETING WITH NKOMO,
MUGABE AND A RESTRICTED GROUP, OWEN OUTLINED HIS
IMPROVED PROPOSAL FOR A "GOVERNING COUNCIL" AND MILITARY
ADVISORY GROUP FOR THE TRANSITION PERIOD. IN SPITE OF
ENCOURAGING INDICATION AT LUNCH THAT THE PF WAS LOOKING
FOR A COMPROMISE THEY RESISTED OUR PROPOSALS AND CONTINUED
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TO CRITICIZE OUR REFUSAL TO ACCEPT THAIR DESIRE FOR A
SUBSTANTIAL AND VISIBLE ROLE IN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT.
END SUMMARY.

1. WE MET IN SMALL GROUP WITH DELEGATION LEADERS PLUS
TWO, AND UN REPS. ALTHOUGH ANGOLAN OBSERVERS ARRIVED
THIS AFTERNOON, FRONT LINE REPS WERE NOT INCLUDED IN

SESSION. MEETING LASTED ABOUT THREE HOURS, DEVOTED TO REVISED US/UK PROPOSALS FOR TRANSITION PERIOD.

2. OWEN BEGAN BY DESCRIBING OUR NEW PROPOSAL BASED ON THE DESIRE EXPRESSED BY THE PF TO ASSUME GREATER RESPONSIBILITY DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD.

HE

PROPOSED A COUNCIL MADE UP OF ELEVEN MEMBERS, TWO REPRESENTING EACH OF THE FIVE PARTIES AT GENEVA WITH THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER AS NON-VOTING CHANHZAN. UM REP WOULD HAVE OBSERVER STATUS. "SWALLOWING HARD", OWEN AGREED TO CALL THE BODY A "GOVERNING COUNCIL". THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER WOULD BE OBLIGED TO CONSULT ON ALL MATTERS EXCEPT THOSE RELATING TO EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND INTERNAL SECURITY AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION. HE WOULD HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO LEGISLATE BUT COULD BE OVERRULED BY TWO-THIRDS OF THE

COUNCIL WHICH BY THE SAME VOTE COULD ALSO INITIATE AND PASS LEGISLATION WHICH HE HAD NOT PROPOSED. (EXT BY SEPTTEL)

3. THE BRITISH ALSO DISTRIBUTED ANOTHER PAPER DESCRIBING THE TWO MILITARY ADVISORY COMMITTEES: THE CEASE-FIRE MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE AND TRANSITIONAL MILITARY COMMITTEE (TEXT BY SEPTTEL). THEY POINTED OUT THAT REPRESENTATION ON THE FIRST OF THESE WOULD BE LIMITED TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

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MILITARY COMMANDERS (I.E. PF) WHILE ALL PARTIES WOULD BE MEMBERS OF THE SECOND, THE FUNCTION OF WHICH WAS TO CONSIDER MATERS RELATED TO THE FORMATION OF THE INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE NATIONAL ARMY.

4. NKOMO, MUGABE AND THEIR ADVISORS QUESTIONED THE ANGLO-AMERICAN DELEGATIONS IN DETAIL ABOUT THE PROPOSALS. THEY ASKED: WHY REPRESENTATION SHOULD BE BASED ON GENEVA AND WHAT SPECIAL RECOGNITION WAS GIVEN TO THE FACT THAT THEY, WHO HAD BEEN DOING THE FIGHTING, WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR BRINGING ABOUT THE TRANSITION PERIOD. THEY COMPLAINED THAT THE PROPOSAL EQUATED THEM WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE WHO TOGETHER WITH SMITH WOULD HAVE A MAJORITY VICE WHICH THEY AT MOST COULD ONLY BLOCK. NKOMO COMPLAINED THAT HE COULD NEVER SELL SUCH A PROPOSAL TO THE MEN WHO HAD BROUGHT ABOUT SMITH'S DEPARTURE. AT ONE POINT HE EMOTIONALLY CLAIMED THAT THE PROPOSALS WERE AIMED AT THE DISMANTLING OF HIS FORCES. MUGABE ASKED WHY SO MUCH POWER SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER. YOUNG AND CARVER ARGUED THAT THE PRESSURE OF OPINION EXERCISED THROUGH OBSERVERS IN THE PRESS, THE UN AND THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE COULD FORCE THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER

TO ACT RESPONSIBLY TO PREVENT ARBITRARY AND UNFAIR ACTION. HE WOULD BE ACTING "UNDER THE PUBLIC GAZE". THE POWERS RESERVED TO THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER WERE NORMAL; THEY COULD NOT BE EXERCISED BY A COMMITTEE, THEY STRESSED HOW FAR WE HAD GONE IN AN ATTEMPT TO MEET PF DEMANDS.

5. THERE WAS A LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF THE POLICE FORCES. NKOMO STRESSED THAT PF MRESENCE IN THE ARMED FORCES, POLICE AND JUDICIARY IS OF ENORMOUS IMPORTANCE. HE SAID THAT THE POLICE FORCE COULD NOT BE LEFT AS IT EXISTS. HE AND MUGABE CLAIMED THAT THEY COULD PROVIDE THEIR OWN MEN FOR THE FORCE AND INSISTED THAT THE MATTER COULD NOT BE RESOLVED UNLESS WE AGREED TO A
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MIXED POLICE FORCE. THEY COMPLAANED THAT MOST OF THE POLICE WERE ENGAGED IN POLITICAL REPRESSION; THAT IT WAS A BIASED ORGANIZATION AND THAT IT WOULD TEKE MUCH TOO LONG TO CORRECT ITS ABUSES. OWEN AND CARVER EXPLAINED THE DIFFICULTIES OF DEALING WITH AN UNTRAINED FORCE OR ONE THAT HAD BEEN HASTILY ORGANIZED. THEY SAID THAT AS SOON AS AGREEMENT WAS REACHED THE FUTURE CHIEF OF POLICE WOULD STUDY THE FORCE TO ELIMINATE POLITICAL ELEMENTS AND THOSE ENGAGED IN UNACCEPTABLE ACTIVITIES.

6. OWEN AND YOUNG EACH REFERRED ON DIFFERENT OCCASIONS TO THE BROADER PARAMETERS OF THE DISCUSSION. OWEN SAID HE WOULD NOT TAKE A PROPOSAL TO THE CABINET WHICH DID NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE FRONT LINE, AND IN MARTICULAR THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES OF ZAMBIA AND MOZAMBIQUE. ANDY YOUNG DESCRIBED THE MANY ADVANTAGES WHICH WOULD ACCRUE TO THE PF IF IT ACCEPTED THE PROPOSALS INCLUDING: SMITH'S DEPARTURE, DISMANTLING OF THE ARMY, DEPOLITIZATION OF THE POLICE, INDEPENDENCE, ONE MAN ONE VOTE, END OF DISCRIMINATORY LEGISLATION AND THE RIGHT OF LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY IN SPECIFIC AREAS. AT ANOTHER STAGE HE NOTED THAT IF AGREEMENT WAS NOT ACHIEVED AND A MILITARY SOLUTION WAS PURSUED, THE US WOULD HAVE TO REVIEW ITS POSITION. ONE OF THE THINGS IT COULD DO WAS TO STRENGTHEN THE SURROUNDING STATES.

7. COMMENT: WHILE THE PF SHOWED NO GIVE DURING THE COURSE OF THE AFTERNOON, THERE WAS AN EASY GIVE-AND-TAKE AND AN EXPLORATION IN GREATER DEPTH THAN WE HAVE EVER HAD BEFORE WITH THEM ON THE PROBLEMS A TRANSITION GOVERNMENT WOULD FACE. IT WAS FRANKLY LOOKING FOR SOME WAY TO DEMONSTRATE TO ITS OWN FORCES A VISIBLE
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AND SUBSTANTIAL ROLE IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE
TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT. THOUGH OWEN WAS WILLING TO
GO FURTHER THAN HE HAD EVER GONE BEFORE, HIS MAXIMUM
POSITION CLEARLY DID NOT SATISFY THEM. NEVERTHELESS,
WE BELIEVE THEY RECOGNIZED THAT OWEN WAS MAKING A GENUINE
ATTEMPT TO LISTEN TO AND TAKE SERIOUSLY THEIR CONCERNS.
CLEARLY THERE IS NO BASIS FOR AGREEMENT VISIBLE AT
THIS STAGE. THE PF CAN CLAIM TO IST CRITICS THAT IT
HAS GIVEN OUR PROPOSALS SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BUT NOT
THAT IT IS WILLING TO ACCEPT ANYTHING LESS THAN CONTROL
OVER THE TRANSITION PERIOD.
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